



LEADERSHIP

The first of four advertisements descriptive of The Country Gentleman

There are between six and seven million farms in the United States. Of these probably about three million are owned or operated by people of such intelligence and prosperity as makes them potential customers for the higher grades of merchandise.

In addition to these, there are probably one million families living in towns or cities, but who have a direct interest in farms, and who also have intelligence and means which make them valuable customers for farm utilities as well as for general merchandise.

This means a total market for farm advertising of 4,000,000. But these 4,000,000 families are not of equal value.

There is at the top a narrow margin, probably covered by 250,000, that represents leadership in the agricultural field. These are the well-known, progressive farmers who set the pace in their respective localities, the county agents, country bankers and agricultural educators.

About half the market, or 2,000,000 is made up of farm families who have some education, live fairly comfortably, and offer a market for many kinds of goods, but who do not have large purchasing power and are not influential. Each of them counts one in his community. But they follow, they do not lead.

Between, lies the middle class of about 1,750,000 substantial farmers, of a high degree of intelligence and progressiveness. These are the business farmers—alert, systematic business men. These men are studying efficient organization, crop rotation, intensive cultivation, price grading and profitable marketing. Many of them are working under the direct advice of county agents or in constant touch with government experiment stations. Some of them have but a few acres, some of them tens of thousands.

They are all out for profits—and the most important thing about farming for them is getting the dollar back.

In the last decade or two this kind of farmer has been increasing very rapidly. The agricultural colleges and schools are turning out such men at the rate of more than 20,000 a year.

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Inevitably there arose among men like these, as they multiplied, a need for a certain kind of farm paper—a publication that viewed agriculture as a business to be prosecuted by business methods, that looked beyond the rail fences of local and sectional affairs and viewed the whole sweep of national progress from the point of view of the intelligent farmer.

In 1911 The Curtis Publishing Company bought The Country Gentleman for the purpose of reconstructing it to meet this obvious and growing need.

The editorial idea on which The Country Gentleman is being published is not new, nor experimental.

Long ago, by the growth of The Ladies' Home Journal and The Saturday Evening Post, the same fundamentals were proved sound and practical.

Applying these fundamentals to the farm field, we have built in The Country Gentleman a publication which is unique because it has the following characteristics:

- (1) A national farm paper, covering all sections.
- (2) A general farm paper, covering all agricultural subjects.
- (3) A genuine family paper, touching all interests of the country home.
- (4) The exponent of farming as a business—reaching in each farm center the important group of influential, up-to-date business farmers.

In its four years under new ownership, the circulation of The Country Gentleman has increased from 21,000 to 350,000. This circulation thus far has been obtained almost entirely from the leaders of agricultural progress in town and country.

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An astute politician once said that if he could get the right two men in every town he could carry the state politically.

Mr. Smith, the leading farmer of his community, buys a silo that has been attracted to his attention through the advertising pages of The Country Gentleman. His neighbors, who respect his sound judgment, buy similar silos, though possibly they themselves are not readers of The Country Gentleman.

Mr. Smith's wife reads of a household product, buys it in the city, and then calls for it at the rural general store. The storekeeper is accustomed to look to Mrs. Smith for ideas. He promptly stocks the article for which she asks, although requests from other patrons might have been ignored—and those who are accustomed to buy what the store carries automatically become purchasers of that brand.

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It is because The Country Gentleman is reaching the men and women who hold leadership in methods and in merchandise among progressive business farmers, that The Country Gentleman has been able so early to demonstrate its efficiency for the advertising both of farm utilities and general merchandise.

This is perhaps demonstrated by the fact that in 1914 The Country Gentleman was one of the six among the 54 leading farm papers which showed an increase in volume of advertising.

And its increase was greater than the aggregate increases of all the other five put together.

THE CURTIS PUBLISHING COMPANY

INDEPENDENCE SQUARE, PHILADELPHIA

The Ladies' Home Journal

The Saturday Evening Post

The Country Gentleman